

# In the United States Court of Federal Claims

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 19-1613V

UNPUBLISHED

MELISSA HEFFLEY,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: July 23, 2021

Special Processing Unit (SPU);  
Damages Decision Based on Proffer;  
Influenza (Flu) Vaccine; Shoulder  
Injury Related to Vaccine  
Administration (SIRVA)

*Maximillian J. Muller, Muller Brazil, LLP, Dresher, PA, for petitioner.*

*Camille Michelle Collett, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for respondent.*

### **DECISION AWARDING DAMAGES<sup>1</sup>**

On October 16, 2019, Melissa Heffley filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*<sup>2</sup> (the “Vaccine Act”). On July 14, 2021, Petitioner filed an amended petition. In the amended petition, Petitioner alleges that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration (“SIRVA”) as a result of an influenza vaccine received on December 7, 2017. Amended Petition at 1. The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On July 23, 2021, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding Petitioner entitled to compensation for SIRVA. On July 23, 2021, Respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”) indicating Petitioner should be awarded \$52,500.00 for pain and suffering and \$285.64 to satisfy the State of Washington Medicaid lien. Proffer at 1-2. In

<sup>1</sup> Because this unpublished decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action in this case, I am required to post it on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2012) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

<sup>2</sup> National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all “§” references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2012).

the Proffer, Respondent represented that Petitioner agrees with the proffered award. *Id.* Based on the record as a whole, I find that Petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer.

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, **I award Petitioner the following:**

- **A lump sum payment of \$52,500.00 in the form of a check payable to Petitioner; and**
- **A lump sum payment of \$285.64, representing compensation for satisfaction of the State of Washington Medicaid lien, in the form of a check payable jointly to Petitioner and:**

OPTUM  
Washington Apple Health (File #41037221)  
L-3994  
Columbus, OH 43260-3994  
Tax ID: 41-1858498

Petitioner agrees to endorse the check in the amount of \$285.64 for satisfaction of the Medicaid lien.

These amounts represent compensation for all elements of compensation that would be available under § 15(a).

The clerk of the court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.<sup>3</sup>

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

**s/Brian H. Corcoran**  
Brian H. Corcoran  
Chief Special Master

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<sup>3</sup> Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS**

MELISSA HEFFLEY,

Petitioner,

V.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 19-1613V

Chief Special Master Corcoran

ECF

### **PROFFER ON AWARD OF COMPENSATION**

On May 24, 2021, respondent filed a Vaccine Rule 4(c) report concluding that petitioner suffered an injury that is compensable under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-10 to -34, that is, a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration (“SIRVA”), as defined in the Vaccine Injury Table. ECF No. 19. Accordingly, on July 23, 2021, the Chief Special Master issued a Ruling on Entitlement. ECF No. 23.

## I. Compensation for Vaccine Injury-Related Items

### A. Pain and Suffering

Based upon the evidence of record, respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded a lump sum of **\$52,500.00**, for pain and suffering, in the form of a check payable to petitioner. Petitioner agrees.

### B. Medicaid Lien

Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded funds to satisfy the State of Washington Medicaid lien in the amount of **\$285.64**, which represents full satisfaction of any right of subrogation, assignment, claim, lien, or cause of action the State of Washington may

have against any individual as a result of any Medicaid payments the State of Washington has made to or on behalf of petitioner from the date of her eligibility for benefits through the date of judgment in this case as a result of her alleged vaccine-related injury suffered on or about December 7, 2017 under Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

The above amounts represent all elements of compensation to which petitioner would be entitled under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a). Petitioner agrees.

## **II. Form of the Award**

The parties recommend that compensation provided to petitioner should be made through two lump sum payments described below, and request that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following:<sup>1</sup>

- A. A lump sum payment of **\$52,500.00** in the form of a check payable to petitioner; and
- B. A lump sum payment of **\$285.64**, representing compensation for satisfaction of the State of Washington Medicaid lien, in the form of a check payable jointly to petitioner and:

OPTUM  
Washington Apple Health (File #: 41037221)  
L-3994  
Columbus, OH 43260-3994

Tax ID: 41-1858498

Petitioner agrees to endorse the check in the amount of \$285.64 for satisfaction of the Medicaid lien. Petitioner is a competent adult. Evidence of guardianship is not required in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BRIAN M. BOYNTON  
Acting Assistant Attorney General

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<sup>1</sup> Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief. In particular, respondent would oppose any award for future medical expenses, future pain and suffering, and future lost wages.

C. SALVATORE D’ALESSIO  
Acting Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

HEATHER L. PEARLMAN  
Deputy Director  
Torts Branch, Civil Division

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/s/Camille M. Collett  
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DATED: July 23, 2021